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OF
Transubstantiation:
OR, A
REPLY
TO A
LATE PAPER,
CALL'D,

A Full ANSWER to Dr. *Tenison's* CONFERENCES
concerning the EUCHARIST.

THe *Transubstantiators*, it seems, are as apt to fancy one Man, as one thing to be another; hence it is, that they have turn'd the Publisher of the *Six Conferences*, lately put out, into a *French man*; for such a one, I am assur'd, was the Author of those Dialogues. And therefore both this Gentleman, and his Friend, who, he says, was so good at guessing, must guess again. *Transubstantiation* is a Doctrine so absurd and groundless, that a man can never want Arguments against it. But Protestants sensible of the goodness of their Cause, will sometimes give Overplus in reasoning with their Adversaries; and when they have prov'd that there is no such Doctrine as that of *Transubstantiation*, reveal'd, they next endeavour to shew *ex abundanti*, that 'tis impossible it shou'd; If it were never so possible it shou'd, yet it does not follow that it is. Nor can Papiists ever prove it, till they first prove themselves Infallible in interpreting Scripture. For, as for those Words, *This is my Body, which is broken for you*; 'tis evident that they lye much more easy and naturally to be interpreted in the Protestant than Popish Sense, as some of their own Authors have been so ingenuous as to confess. So that here is a desperate hard Task still lying upon 'em, were it granted possible that such a thing shou'd be reveal'd. But that that is impossible, may be thus made out. It cannot be reveal'd, but by giving us greater Evidence to think it true, than we have to think it false. Now we prove it false by the clear Evidence, both of Sense and Reason. Of Sense, because all our Senses tell us, that that is Bread, which if their Doctrine be true, is not Bread, but the Body of a Man. Of Reason, because that Faculty does assure us as much as it can of any thing, that one and

the same Body cannot be in several places at once, nor the whole Body of a Man crowded into the compass of a Pins head, and that still divisible into a great many more whole Bodies, &c. But here the Papiists stop us short, catching at one part of the Argument. For, Sense, say they, may deceive us as it did *Abraham*, who thought he saw Men, when he saw Angels: And why then, if God will have it so, may not we see the Body of Christ indeed, when we think we see Bread? I answer, They that appear'd to *Abraham* in the 18th of *Genesis*, for ought that can be prov'd, did for that time assume the real Bodies of Men (it shou'd seem so by their eating.) And *Abraham's* Senses could only tell him that they did appear like Men. If he thereupon concluded immediately that they were Men, he erred, and was led into the Error by his Senses, which no one ever denied, but a Man might be. But he might know (and did, 'tis like, upon a little Reflection) that the Eye alone was not sufficient to inform him at all times, whether what looked like a Man, was one, because an Angel might assume and actuate a humane Body. However, it is certain, that to the making up of that Creature which we call a Man, there goes something more than what is visible to the Eye, viz. a humane Soul. And whether that were there or no, or an Angel in the room of it, was more than *Abraham* could certainly discern by his Senses. But there is not the same case in seeing of a piece of Bread, because there is no ground to think there is any thing in a piece of Bread, more than what is discernable by Sense. To talk of a Substance distinct from the Colour, Taste, Smell, and from the very Quantity and Dimensions also, is but a piece of Scholastick Nonfence. A Body has the

the name of Bread given it, because its matter or quantitative Dimensions (which is all one) have such a certain Colour, Taste, Smell, &c. from the Concurrence or Combination of which, we English Men agree to call it Bread, the *Latins Panis*. Now to say, That a Body having all these, whence by general Consent it is wont to be called Bread, yet is not Bread; is all one, as to say, That Bread is not Bread, which is Nonsense and a Contradiction, and we take *Transubstantiation* to be so, from one end to the other.

Suppose a man shou'd come and shew me a little black Dog, and shou'd face me down that it was no Dog, but the City of *Rome*, nay, and that that whole City was not onely crowded into so little a compass, but that, cut him into never so many pieces, still every Bit was the whole City of *Rome*. If, I say, a man shou'd come and tell me thus, sure this Gentleman would give me leave to think he was out of his Wits. But suppose then such a man as *Xaverius*, who *A. Pulston* says had the Gift of Tongues (tho' he himself complains sadly in one of his Epistles that he had it not, and knew not what to do for want of it, *Ep. Japan. 3. p. 30.*) and raised Twenty five Persons from the Dead: Suppose, I say, he shou'd come and work all these Miracles which *A. Pulston* believes he did work, in my sight, and so as to convince me of the Truth of them, and when he had done, shou'd tell me he wrought all these to convince me that that same black Cur was no Dog, but the whole City of *Rome*, &c. as before. In this case, and upon this mad impossible Supposition (for such we must make, if we would draw a Parallel right) tho' I were never so much convinced of the Truth of his Miracles before, yet I must needs tell him, Sir, you do but confound me. I believed your Miracles to be true, because they seemed so when I had examined them by Sense and Reason as well as I cou'd. But if this intolerable absurdity be that which you wou'd prove by 'em, then I find my Sense and Reason signify nothing. And believe you, I cannot after all; because I have as great, if not greater evidence that this is but a Dog still, than I had, or could have of the Truth of your Miracles. Now let him shew that can, that in this supposition I have made, there are greater absurdities than what are in *Transubstantiation*. But to make it a Parallel case betwixt an Angel sometimes appearing in humane shape, and not being discern'd from a man by the Eye, and a Bit of Bread being turn'd in Ten thousand places, into the same Natural Body of our Saviour, and every Bit of it into the whole Body; and yet to all mens Senses appearing to be nothing in the World but Bread still; this certainly is a great extravagance. And I must tell this Gentleman, that whereas he says it might have been said to *Abraham*, Ask your Eyes, ask your Nose, ask your hands — they will all tell you, 'tis a man you see; herein he says more than he can prove. For we have

no Reason to think that *Abraham* did either smell to, or feel the Angels; and unless the Angels did really take humane Bodies, I suppose, feeling wou'd have discovered the Truth; because our Saviour says, *Handle me and see, for a Spirit hath not Flesh and Bones as ye see me have.*

But this Gentleman charges the Doctor (his falsely supposed Author of the Conferences) with great ignorance in Logick, for reasoning in this manner. *If our Senses deceive us in the Report they make of the Eucharist, they may as well deceive us in every thing else.* Now I confess I see no ill Logick in this; for the sequel is easily proved thus; Because our Senses report nothing with clearer Evidence than they do in this matter of the Eucharist. And how, I pray, is there here an Universal drawn from a Particular?

As for comparing *Transubstantiation* with the Trinity, I wou'd desire this Gentleman to answer what has been already written in some Dialogues lately printed on that Subject. Or let him but shew us as good Scripture-roof for *Transubstantiation*, as there is for the Trinity; and try next whether he can load the Doctrine of the Trinity, as deliver'd in Scripture, with as many Absurdities as follow from *Transubstantiation*; And then it will be time to consider, whether we had best believe *Transubstantiation*, or turn *Sociinians*. But this will be a long while a doing. In the mean time it is denied that the Doctrine of the Trinity does at all contradict that Maxim, *Quæ conveniunt in uno tertio conveniunt inter se*, in the true sense of it.

As for this Gentleman's way of dealing with an Infidel, to make him believe *Transubstantiation*; I must tell him, that if his Infidel understood himself, it will prove insufficient. For, 1. Whereas he says that they agree, God sees Truths which we cannot understand, and that he can reveal those Truths; his Infidel may tell him, That if there be any Truths repugnant to the first Principles of all humane Knowledge, God must give us other Faculties, before he can reveal such Truths to us. And, 2. That he can never make it appear, that the Moral Evidence he talks of, is equal to the Moral Evidence we have of the falsity of *Transubstantiation*.

Lastly, As for the Threatning Conclusion, That the Doctor may chance to smart for attempting the Destruction of their Church; If he means in this World, let him say it plainly: If he means in the next, he might know we fear not that upon this Account. All the danger we fear for opposing that Church (in this way of Disputation and Reasoning) is wholly in this World; in the other we believe they will be more in danger to suffer for defending it.

IMPRIMATUR,

Nov. 22.
1687.

Guil. Needham.